The Influence of Riau Jawi Arabic Script Literacy on the Understanding of Malay Islamic Moral Values based on the Manuscript "Ini Risalah Bernama Periasan Perempuan Bagi Anak-Anak Perempuan" in MA Alkhairaat Bintauna Students

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
	This research is motivated by the declining attention to the role of Jawi Arabic literacy as a pedagogical instrument in strengthening Malay Islamic moral values in Islamic educational institutions. The main purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of Jawi Arabic literacy on the understanding of Malay Islamic moral values in MA Alkhairaat Bintauna students. The study used a quantitative approach with a correlation-descriptive design, involving 92 respondents selected through *the proportionate stratified random sampling technique*. The research instrument was in the form of a Likert scale questionnaire that had been tested for validity and reliability, while data analysis was carried out through normality, linearity, *paired-sample t-test*, and simple linear regression tests using SPSS version 26. The research was carried out during October-November 2025 in North Bolaang Mongondow Regency, North Sulawesi, by paying attention to research ethics procedures such as participant consent and data confidentiality. The results of the study showed that Jawi Arabic literacy had a positive but weak effect on the understanding of Malay Islamic moral values ($R = 0.251$; $R^2 = 0.063$), with a statistically insignificant increase in literacy ability ($p = 0.381$) but a significant improvement in moral value comprehension ($p = 0.000$). These findings confirm that Jawi literacy plays a role as a medium for internalizing values and character formation, not just linguistic skills. Theoretically and practically, this research contributes to strengthening the paradigm of Islamic education based on local cultural literacy, by placing the Jawi script as a bridge between language, culture, and morality in the development of the modern Islamic education curriculum.

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Introduction

Jawi Arabic literacy has long been an inseparable part of the scientific, educational, and Malay-Islamic cultural traditions in the archipelago. Historically, the Jawi script has not only functioned as a means of written communication, but also as the main medium for the delivery of Islamic teachings and the dissemination of religious knowledge related to the morals and morality of the Malay community. This script has served as a forum for the intellectual development of local Islam as well as a marker of Islam in the context of typical Malay

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culture.[1] Through various religious texts and literary works in classical Malay, Jawi writing became an important tool in transmitting Islamic moral teachings and values which were then internalized by Muslim communities in Southeast Asia.[2] This makes Jawi literacy not only a linguistic phenomenon, but also an epistemological legacy that shapes the mindset, ethics, and behavior of Malay-Muslims in various regions.[3]

In the modern context, various studies show that Jawi literacy has a very deep meaning in the process of education and the formation of religious identity. An exploration of students' perceptions of Jawi literacy shows that the ability to read and write Jawi letters is not only a technical skill, but also part of self-interpretation of Islamic values and cultural heritage.[4] Students who know and study Jawi tend to have a stronger awareness of the cultural roots and history of Malay Islam. This literacy process becomes a medium for internalizing Islamic moral values through texts, interpretations, and religious literary works.[5] The Jawi literacy tradition also emphasizes the close connection between language, religion, and culture, where Jawi learning plays an important role in introducing the concepts of morality, politeness, and human values taught in Islam to the younger generation.[6]

Research on the representation of Arabic literature and Arabic-Jawi script in Southeast Asia also shows that Jawi literacy is a form of integration between the Arab-Islamic intellectual heritage and the local culture that grows in Malay society.[7] This integration shows the dynamics of dialogue between Arabic texts and local traditions that produce a distinctive form of Islamic literacy in the Malay region. In the context of education, learning Jawi Arabic script bears a greater responsibility than just preserving the heritage of writing, as it plays a role in shaping the religious identity and morality of students living in the modern Islamic educational environment.[8] Hashim et al. (2021) emphasized that Jawi literacy has an important position in the development of Islamic curriculum, especially in the context of madrasas, Islamic boarding schools, and Islamic educational institutions that seek to instill moral, ethical, and social responsibility values.

In Islamic education, Arabic and Jawi literacy is seen as a means of character formation that is oriented towards noble moral values. Moral values in Malay Islam are usually conveyed through Malay-language religious literature written in Jawi script.[9] Classic manuscripts such as Ethical and Moral Guidance for Muslim Women from the Riau-Lingga Sultanate are examples of texts that explicitly teach the concepts of politeness, responsibility, and social piety based on the Malay Islamic view.[10] The manuscript shows that Jawi literacy is not only a medium for teaching language and writing, but also a means of instilling Islamic morality in accordance with the social and cultural context of the Malay society.[2] The latest study confirms that Jawi literacy has great potential in strengthening students' understanding of Islamic values through texts that contain moral and ethical messages.[11]

However, in the academic literature there is still a significant gap in understanding the influence of Jawi Arabic literacy on the understanding of Malay Islamic moral values at the secondary education level, especially in madrasah institutions.[12] Most previous research has focused on aspects of Jawi history, preservation, or culture, while the empirical relationship between Jawi literacy ability and the meaning of students' moral values has not been studied in depth.[13] In fact, in the context of Islamic education in Indonesia, religious literacy skills cannot be separated from the formation of character and morality.[14] A good understanding of Jawi texts can enrich the way students interpret Islamic teachings related to morals and social behavior.[15]

Research gaps are also visible in geographical and cultural contexts. The eastern part of Indonesia, including Gorontalo and Bintauna, is still minimally the focus of Jawi literacy studies, even though institutions such as MA Alkhairaat Bintauna have great potential in developing learning rooted in Malay Islamic traditions. So far, the study of Jawi literacy has been carried out in the Sumatra region and the Malay Peninsula, while its integration in madrasah education in the eastern region has not been comprehensively explored.[16] This raises questions about how students in the region understand the moral values of Malay Islam through Jawi texts and writings, as well as how their literacy skills affect the formation of daily religious morals and behaviors.[10]

In addition to the empirical gap, there is also a theoretical need to understand the mechanisms by which Jawi literacy can be linked to the understanding of moral values through relevant pedagogical approaches. Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) theory provides a foundation for bridging these relationships. CTL emphasizes the relationship between the subject matter and the real life of students, so that the learning process becomes more meaningful and value-oriented.[17] This approach allows the teaching of Jawi literacy to be contextualized with the local culture and students' experiences in daily life.[18] Through CTL, students not only learn to recognize the Jawi script, but also understand the ethical and moral meaning contained in the Malay religious texts they read.[19]

The media and text-based learning approach can also enrich the Jawi literacy process. The use of learning media such as narrative texts, comics, and reading materials based on local culture has been proven to be effective in improving students' literacy and moral understanding skills.[20] In this context, manuscripts such

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as Ethical and Moral Guidance for Muslim Women can be used as teaching materials that contain Malay Islamic moral values that are contextual with the lives of madrasah students. Through reading and writing Jawi texts, students can interpret moral values in the context of their real lives, so that learning not only emphasizes cognitive aspects, but also affective and psychomotor aspects.[21]

The integration of language, culture, and values in Islamic learning is becoming increasingly important in the midst of social change and globalization.[22] Literacy learning in Islamic schools should not stop at the technical ability of reading and writing, but should be directed at the formation of literacy rooted in Islamic values and local culture.[23] Rokim's study emphasized that literacy programs in Islamic schools should be prepared to actualize moral values and religious culture.[24] Meanwhile, Rahayu & Sidabalok, showed that the CTL approach can be adapted to develop language literacy skills and write texts oriented to Islamic values in madrasas.[25] In the context of santri and dayah education, Putriana & Rizayanti found that contextual-based literacy programs can strengthen basic reading skills and understanding of religious values that live in the culture of students.[26]

Based on this description, this research has a strong urgency to be carried out because it can make a scientific contribution in understanding the relationship between Jawi Arabic literacy and the understanding of Malay Islamic moral values. From the theoretical side, this study expands the study of Islamic literacy through the integration between CTL, media-based learning, and character building.[27] From a practical perspective, the results of this research can be used as the basis for the development of a Jawi literacy curriculum in the madrasah environment that prioritizes cultural relevance and values. In addition, this research also has the potential to provide policy input for Islamic educational institutions to develop a literacy learning model that not only emphasizes linguistic aspects, but also ethical and morality aspects. Jawi literacy can be used as a path to deepen students' understanding of Malay Islamic moral values and foster awareness of cultural heritage which is an important part of Islamic identity in the archipelago.[28]

Thus, this research is expected to answer the empirical and theoretical gap on how Jawi Arabic literacy affects the understanding of Malay Islamic moral values in students at MA Alkhairaat Bintauna. This study is not only an effort to preserve the heritage of Malay Islamic literacy, but also a real contribution to strengthening the Islamic character, morals, and identity of the younger generation in the contemporary Islamic education system in Indonesia.

Method

This research method uses a correlational quantitative approach to analyze the influence of Jawi Arabic literacy on the understanding of Malay Islamic moral values in MA Alkhairaat Bintauna students. This approach was chosen because it allows for the measurement of relationships between variables objectively and statistically testable. The free variable is the literacy of the Jawi Arabic script, while the bound variable is the understanding of Malay Islamic moral values. This design is descriptive-correlational, which describes the level of Jawi literacy of students while measuring its influence on their understanding of moral values.

The research was carried out at MA Alkhairaat Bintauna, North Bolaang Mongondow Regency, North Sulawesi Province. This location was chosen purposively because the madrasah has Arabic and religious language learning that is relevant to the context of Jawi literacy, and represents the eastern region of Indonesia that is still rarely studied in the context of Malay Islamic education. The research period lasted from October to November 2025, including the preparation stage, data collection, and analysis of the results. The research population includes all 120 active students of MA Alkhairaat Bintauna for the 2025/2026 academic year. The sample was determined using the proportionate stratified random sampling technique with an error rate of five percent, so that 92 respondents were obtained who were considered representative. This technique ensures proportional representation of each grade level and maintains the external validity of the data.[29]

The research instrument is in the form of a closed questionnaire which is compiled based on the theoretical indicators of the two variables. Jawi literacy is measured through the ability to read, write, and understand Jawi texts, while understanding Malay Islamic moral values includes knowledge, attitudes, and moral behaviors such as honesty, responsibility, and good manners. Each statement item uses a five-level Likert scale. The instrument was tested for validity through experts in the field of Islamic education and Arabic language and tested for reliability with Cronbach's Alpha coefficient to ensure consistency between items. The research procedure includes four stages, namely preparation, data collection, processing, and analysis. The researcher first obtained permission from the madrasah, then distributed questionnaires to students, collected

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data, and processed it using SPSS software version 26. The analysis was carried out through two stages, namely descriptive analysis to describe the level of literacy and moral understanding, and inferential analysis in the form of normality, linearity, and simple linear regression tests to test the influence of Jawi literacy on the moral values of Malay Islam.

This research was carried out by complying with educational research ethics, including official permission from the madrasah, providing clear information to respondents, and ensuring the confidentiality of participants' identities. Student participation is voluntary without coercion, and research results are used solely for academic purposes. Researchers maintain integrity, honesty, and objectivity throughout the research process. Through this structured and ethical method, the research is expected to produce valid findings and contribute to the development of Malay Islamic cultural literacy in the Islamic education environment, especially at MA Alkhairaat Bintauna.

Results and Discussion

1. Description of Research Data

This study was conducted to measure the influence of Jawi Arabic literacy on the understanding of Malay Islamic moral values in MA Alkhairaat Bintauna students. A total of 92 respondents from classes X, XI, and XII were involved in this study. Each respondent took two stages of measurement, namely the pre-test before learning and the post-test after learning. Measurements were made on two main variables: (1) Jawi Arabic Literacy (X), which includes the ability to recognize letters, read, write, and understand Jawi texts, (2) Understanding of Malay Islamic Moral Values (Y), which includes students' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors towards Malay Islamic moral values such as manners, responsibility, trust, and honesty. Descriptive analysis was carried out to find out the general picture of students' abilities in the two variables. The results of the descriptive statistical calculation are shown in the following table.

**Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables**

Variabel	Phase	Average	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Jawi Literacy (X)	Pre-test	72,84	7,94	57	100
Jawi Literacy (X)	Post-test	73,51	8,41	56	99
Malay Islamic Moral Values (Y)	Pre-test	70,16	8,39	51	90
Malay Islamic Moral Values (Y)	Post-test	78,09	9,55	58	99

The data above shows a quite striking difference between the development of the two research variables. The average score of Jawi literacy (X) increased very slightly from 72.84 to 73.51, while the variable of understanding Malay Islamic moral values (Y) increased from 70.16 to 78.09. A small change in variable X indicates that students' technical ability in knowing, reading, and writing Jawi script has not shown significant improvement after learning. However, a significant increase in variable Y illustrates that the learning activities carried out have had a positive impact on the affective aspects and understanding of students' Islamic values.

These results show a difference in patterns between technical skills-based learning and value-based learning. Jawi literacy, as a linguistic skill, requires repeated practice and continuous exposure to Jawi texts, so changes in a short period of time are difficult to occur significantly. On the other hand, the understanding of Malay Islamic moral values is easier to improve through reflective approaches, moral discussions, and contextual learning that relate Islamic values to the reality of students' lives. This is in line with the theory of Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) which emphasizes that the linkage between the learning context and the real life of students can strengthen the internalization of values. [30]

To give a clearer picture of the change in the average score of the two variables, the pre-test and post-test results are visualized in the following graph.

Graph 1. Comparison of Average Pre-test and Post-test Scores

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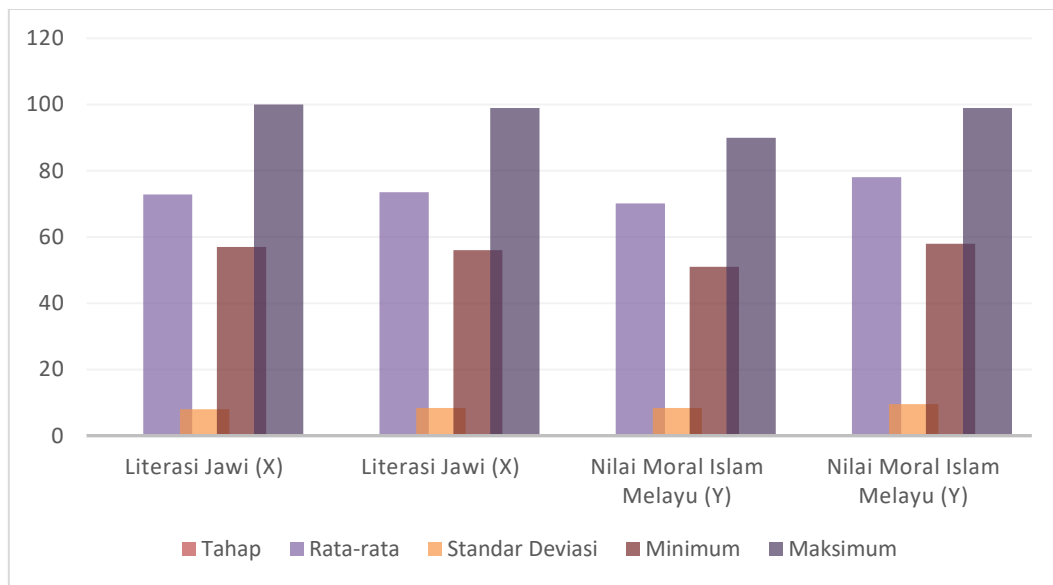
The graph above shows a fairly pronounced trend difference between the two variables. The blue line representing Jawi literacy (X) appears horizontal, indicating no significant improvement in students' technical abilities. On the other hand, the orange line representing the understanding of Malay Islamic moral values (Y) shows a sharp increase from the pre-test to the post-test stage.

This condition strengthens the descriptive finding that the learning activities implemented have more influence on the formation of students' awareness of values and morals than on the ability to read and write Javanese scripts. This phenomenon can be explained through a contextual and value-based learning approach, where students are not only invited to understand Jawi texts linguistically, but also reflect on the moral message in them.[31] Thus, the literacy process that occurs is cultural and spiritual, not just technical.

In addition, the results of this graph show that the function of Jawi literacy as a medium of value is still running, even though the improvement in technical ability is low. In other words, Jawi literacy plays a role as a means of value internalization, not just an academic skill. These findings are in line with the views of Aqila et al. which emphasizes that the Jawi script functions as a forum for the inheritance of Malay Islamic knowledge and morals that go beyond the language aspect.[8]

2. Statistical Test Results

After the data is obtained from the pre-test and post-test results, the next step is to conduct statistical analysis to test the research hypothesis. This stage aims to determine whether the data meets the basic assumptions of parametric analysis as well as to find out the extent of the relationship and influence between the variables of Jawi Arabic literacy (X) on the understanding of Malay Islamic moral values (Y). Therefore, the analysis process is carried out systematically in order to be able to describe the relationship between variables with a high level of accuracy.

The analysis stage begins with an examination of the basic assumptions required in the use of parametric statistical methods. This check is important to ensure that the data meets the criteria of normality and linearity, so that the test results obtained are valid and can be interpreted appropriately. The normality test is performed to determine whether the distribution of the data follows a normal distribution pattern, while the linearity test is used to assess the consistency of the relationship between the free variable and the bound variable. These two initial stages are the basis for determining the feasibility of using advanced tests such as paired t-tests and simple linear regression.

Furthermore, the paired t-test was used to compare the results of the pre-test and post-test, in order to see the changes that occurred in the ability of Jawi literacy and the understanding of Malay Islamic moral values after the learning intervention was carried out. Meanwhile, a simple linear regression test was applied to determine the direction and magnitude of the influence of Jawi literacy variables on the increase in students' moral values. These four stages of analysis form a complementary set of procedures, provide a comprehensive

overview of the effectiveness of religious literacy-based learning, and affirm the empirical contribution of Jawi literacy in supporting character education in the madrasah environment.

Normality Test

Normality tests are performed to ensure that the data of each variable has a distribution that is close to normal. This test is important because most parametric tests, including linear regression and t-test, require normal data distribution.[32] The test was carried out using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov method, with decision-making criteria: if the significance value (Sig.) is greater than 0.05, the data is declared to be normally distributed.

Table 1. Normality Test Results (Kolmogorov–Smirnov Test)

Variabel	Sig. (Kolmogorov–Smirnov)	Information
Jawi Literacy (X)	0,117	Normally distributed data
Malay Islamic Moral Values (Y)	0,089	Normally distributed data

The results in the table above show that the significance value for the Jawi literacy variable (X) is 0.117 and for the Malay Islamic moral value variable (Y) is 0.089, both greater than 0.05. Thus, the data of the two variables can be declared to be normally distributed. This condition is eligible for parametric analysis at the next stage.

The variation in scores between respondents shows a proportional distribution of data, indicating that the measurement results are in stable and representative conditions. No extreme deviations or outliers were found that could affect the reliability of the analysis, so the distribution of data can be considered consistent with the statistical assumptions of the study. This stability indicates that all respondents provide relatively homogeneous answers in the context of reading, writing, and understanding the Jawi script. This strengthens the validity of the instruments used and shows that the data collected reflect the actual conditions of the student population that is the research sample.

Substantively, the distribution of the scores also shows that the level of Jawi literacy and understanding of Malay Islamic moral values among students has a relatively uniform balance at each grade level. This equality of distribution shows that there are no striking differences between groups of students with different academic backgrounds or learning experiences, so it can be concluded that the learning process of literacy and moral values takes place equally throughout the classroom. This condition reflects the effectiveness of the learning system implemented at MA Alkhairaat Bintauna, where the understanding of Malay Islamic values through Jawi literacy develops consistently among students without dominance or lag in certain groups.

Linearity Test

Once the data is declared normal, the next step is to perform a linearity test to see if the relationship between variables X and Y is linear.[33] The linearity test is important to ensure that the relationship between Jawi literacy and the understanding of moral values can be analyzed with a linear regression model. The results of the linearity test showed a significance value of 0.032 (< 0.05), which means that the relationship between the two variables is linear and positive. In other words, the improvement of Jawi literacy skills tends to be followed by an increase in the understanding of Malay Islamic moral values.

However, the relationship is weak, which means that increased Jawi literacy does not automatically result in a major improvement in moral understanding. This is logical considering that Jawi literacy is linguistic-technical, while understanding moral values involves affective aspects, attitudes, and broader value reflection. In the context of Islamic education, this kind of relationship can be interpreted as a form of symbolic connection: students who have good Jawi skills have an easier time understanding the moral content of Jawi texts, although the improvement is not always quantitatively significant.

The stability of the proportional score distribution also shows that the data obtained from the research instrument has high reliability and reflects real conditions in the field. These results show that there is no bias in the data collection process, either due to external factors such as the testing environment or internal factors such as respondents' unpreparedness. The consistency of grades between respondents reinforces the belief that students understand each item of the statement in the instrument well. In addition, a balanced spread of scores signifies that the measured range of literacy and moral comprehension abilities

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actually reflects the natural degree of variation among the study participants, rather than the result of the uncontrollability of the measurement process.

From a pedagogical perspective, the relatively even distribution also indicates that learning interventions in madrassas have reached all levels of students fairly. The absence of extreme gaps between high-achieving and low-achieving student groups shows that the strategies of teaching Jawi literacy and moral value education have been implemented in an inclusive manner. This condition shows the effectiveness of the learning approach applied by teachers in creating an equal academic environment, where every student gets the same opportunity to develop religious literacy skills and understanding of Malay Islamic ethics. This finding is an indicator that the education system at MA Alkhairaat Bintauna has a fairly good mechanism for equitable distribution of learning quality and has the potential to become a model for other Islamic educational institutions that seek to integrate local cultural literacy with character education.

Paired Sample t-Test

The paired t-test was performed to compare the average pre-test and post-test results of the two variables.[34] This test aims to find out whether there are significant differences before and after literacy-based learning and Malay Islamic values are carried out.

Table 3. Paired t-Test Results

Variabel	Mean Difference	t count	Sig. (2-tailed)	Information
Jawi Literacy (X)	0,67	0,88	0,381	Insignificant
Malay Islamic Moral Values (Y)	7,93	6,42	0,000	Signifikan

The test results showed that the Jawi literacy variable (X) had a significance value of 0.381 (> 0.05), so there was no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores. This means that students' Jawi literacy skills do not experience significant improvement after learning. In contrast, the Malay Islamic moral value variable (Y) has a significance value of 0.000 (< 0.05), which indicates a significant difference between before and after treatment. Thus, it can be concluded that students' understanding of Malay Islamic moral values has increased significantly after the religious literacy-based learning process is implemented.

These results show an interesting trend. Although the technical ability of Jawi literacy is relatively stagnant, students' moral understanding has actually increased significantly. This phenomenon reinforces the assumption that Malay Islamic values conveyed through Jawi texts are not only understood literally, but internalized through reflective and contextual approaches. Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL)-based learning seems to play an important role in bridging the relationship between text and meaning, where students not only learn to read symbols, but also interpret the moral values contained in them.

A significant increase in the understanding of moral values, although not followed by an increase in the technical ability of Jawi literacy, also shows that the learning process in madrassas emphasizes more on the dimension of meaning than just mechanical skills. This signifies the success of the experiential-oriented approach to learning, in which students are not only recipients of information, but also active subjects in the process of interpreting values. The interaction between texts, teachers, and social contexts allows students to relate the content of the reading to the reality of their lives. Thus, Jawi literacy functions as a medium for the formation of ethical awareness that fosters reflective skills and moral responsibility, not just the ability to read letters or recognize the form of writing.

Simple Linear Regression Test

To measure the magnitude of the influence of Jawi literacy (X) on the understanding of Malay Islamic moral values (Y), a simple linear regression test was carried out. This analysis results in the values of the correlation coefficient (R), the determination coefficient (R^2), the calculated t-value, and the significance value.

Table 4. Simple Linear Regression Test Results

Statistics	Value	Information

R	0,251	Weak positive correlation
R²	0,063	Kontribusi 6,3%
t count	2,41	–
Sig. (p)	0,018	Significant at α = 0.05

The results of the analysis showed a value of R = 0.251, which indicates that the relationship between Jawi literacy and the understanding of Malay Islamic moral values is positive but weak. The R² value = 0.063 indicates that Jawi literacy contributes 6.3% to the variation in understanding of Malay Islamic moral values, while the remaining 93.7% is influenced by other factors such as learning strategies, teacher examples, socio-religious environment, and students' spiritual experiences outside of school. The t-value of 2.41 with a significance of 0.018 (< 0.05) shows that the influence of Jawi literacy on the understanding of Malay Islamic moral values is positive and statistically significant, although not strong. This means that the higher the students' Jawi literacy skills, the higher their tendency to understand the moral values of Malay Islam.

Conceptually, this result emphasizes the role of Jawi literacy not just as a reading and writing tool, but as a medium for educational values and transmission of Malay Islamic culture. Jawi literacy learning at MA Alkhairaat Bintauna has become a symbolic forum to strengthen students' moral awareness, although the improvement of their technical abilities is still limited. Thus, this study emphasizes that the main function of Jawi literacy in Islamic education is to form meaning and value, not just improve linguistic skills.

These findings also show that the effectiveness of Jawi literacy in education is not only reflected through improving language skills, but also through changes in attitudes and value awareness formed during the learning process. When Jawi texts are integrated into meaningful learning activities, students are actively involved in understanding the moral and religious context contained in them. This approach shows that literacy can serve as a well-rounded learning strategy that combines intellectual, emotional, and spiritual development. Jawi learning at MA Alkhairaat Bintauna therefore not only plays a role in preserving the Malay Islamic literacy tradition, but also enriches students' learning experiences with a dimension of values and culture that lives in the context of contemporary Islamic education.

3. Interpretation of Results

Statistical results show that students' Jawi literacy skills tend to stagnate, while the understanding of Malay Islamic moral values has increased significantly. However, regression results show that Jawi literacy still has a positive effect on moral understanding despite its low contribution.

This phenomenon indicates that the function of Jawi literacy in the context of Islamic education does not lie in the technical aspect alone, but in its symbolic and cultural role as a means of internalizing Malay Islamic values.[35] In other words, students gain moral understanding not through improving their reading or writing skills in the Jawi script, but through their interaction with the meaning and moral message contained in the Jawi text taught contextually.

Discussion

The results of the study showed that Jawi Arabic literacy had a positive but weak influence on the understanding of Malay Islamic moral values in MA Alkhairaat Bintauna students, with a contribution of 6.3% (R² = 0.063). Although the improvement in Jawi literacy skills was not statistically significant (p = 0.381), the understanding of Malay Islamic moral values experienced a significant increase (p = 0.000) after the implementation of religious literacy-based learning and local culture. These findings provide new empirical evidence that fills the gap in previous research that has so far emphasized the historical, linguistic, or cultural aspects of Jawi literacy, but has not studied much about its influence on the moral dimension of students in the context of modern Islamic education.[1][5][7]

Previous studies have highlighted the role of the Jawi script as the main means of spreading Islamic teachings and the formation of Malay-Islamic scientific identity. However, most of these studies focus on the context of classical literature and the history of writing, rather than on their empirical influence on students in contemporary madrasas. Therefore, this study fills this gap by presenting quantitative data that shows that Jawi literacy still has a significant educational role, although not through improving technical reading and writing skills, but through the internalization of moral values contained in Jawi texts. Thus, the results of this study strengthen the understanding that Jawi literacy functions as a means of transmitting religious values and identity, not solely as a linguistic competence.

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In addition to making an empirical contribution, this research also fills the geographical and cultural gap in the study of Jawi literacy. Most of the previous studies were conducted in the Sumatra region and the Malay Peninsula, while this study took place in the Eastern Indonesia region, namely at MA Alkhairaat Bintauna, North Sulawesi. This context is important because it broadens the scope of understanding of how Jawi literacy is practiced in the Islamic education ecosystem outside the traditional Malay cultural center. The results of this study show that, although the social environment and regional language in Gorontalo and Bintauna are different from the Malay region in general, the meaning of Islam and moral values contained in Jawi texts can still be accepted and understood by students through the contextual learning process.

Theoretically, the results of this study are in line with the principles of Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) which emphasizes that meaningful learning occurs when students are able to connect the material with real-life contexts.[36] In this study, Jawi texts are not only taught as language materials, but also as moral texts that contain Islamic messages and human values. The learning process encourages students to understand the content of the text, interpret its meaning, and relate it to their social behavior. Thus, the skills of reading and writing the Jawi script become a means of moral reflection and character strengthening. The results of the improvement in the Malay Islamic moral value variable show that CTL-based learning is able to revive the function of Jawi literacy as a value medium that is relevant to the context of modern education.

The results of this study are also in line with the theory of media and text-based learning which emphasizes that texts and learning media based on local culture are able to increase students' understanding of moral and social values. In the context of this research, the Jawi text functions as a moral medium (moral text) that not only channels religious information, but also instills Malay Islamic ethical values. Through reading texts such as Ethical and Moral Guidance for Muslim Women from the Riau-Lingga Sultanate, students not only recognize the Jawi script, but also learn about the concepts of manners, responsibility, and social piety.[37] This proves that local text-based learning plays a role in building a deeper moral understanding because it links academic materials to students' cultural and spiritual identities. [38] [39][40]

In addition, the results of this study strengthen the idea of integration between language, culture, and values in Islamic learning. Although there has been no significant improvement in the technical ability of Jawi literacy, the improvement in understanding of moral values shows that Jawi literacy has pedagogical potential as a tool for character and spirituality development. In the context of MA Alkhairaat Bintauna, Jawi texts are a medium that teaches social ethics and Malay Islamic values such as honesty (sidq), responsibility (amanah), and respect for others (adab). This is in line with the view that literacy based on religious values can strengthen the moral dimension of students when combined with a cultural context and reflective learning.[41]

From a theoretical perspective, the results of this study expand the application of CTL theory and media-based learning in the context of Malay Islamic literacy. Empirical data show that Jawi literacy has a positive influence on the formation of moral values, albeit with a small contribution. This shows that the relationship between literacy and morality is not direct, but through the mechanism of meaning and reflection of values. This process emphasizes that literacy education in the context of Malay Islam not only develops cognitive abilities, but also strengthens the affective and spiritual dimensions of students.[42]

Practically, the findings of this study have important implications for the development of curriculum and learning strategies in madrasas. Learning Jawi literacy should be directed at understanding the meaning of the text, not just copying letters or memorizing the form of writing. The CTL approach based on local culture must also be optimized so that students are able to relate the content of Jawi texts to their moral experiences in daily life. In addition, classic Jawi texts such as Ethical and Moral Guidance for Muslim Women can be used as contextual teaching materials that not only strengthen literacy skills, but also instill Malay Islamic values rooted in tradition and social ethics. [43]

Thus, the results of this study not only provide empirical evidence on the relationship between Jawi literacy and the understanding of Malay Islamic moral values, but also offer a conceptual model for the development of integrative Islamic education. Jawi literacy has proven to be a bridge between language, culture, and values, as well as an effective means of shaping the character and morals of the young generation of Muslims in madrasas. This research also emphasizes that the preservation of Jawi literacy is not just the preservation of cultural heritage symbols, but part of efforts to strengthen the moral roots and identity of Malay Islam in the contemporary Islamic education system.

To provide a more complete understanding of the research findings, it is important to affirm that the results obtained are within certain methodological limits.

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This research has several limitations that need to be considered. First, the relatively short duration of the study (October to November 2025) did not provide enough time to see the improvement of Jawi literacy technical skills optimally, because mastering the Jawi script requires a longer and more continuous learning process. Second, the research was only conducted on one madrasah in North Sulawesi, namely MA Alkhairaat Bintauna, which is not part of the Malay cultural area. This area does not have a Jawi literacy tradition, so learning takes place outside the historical and cultural context of its origin. Hula's study of the orthography of Pegon Gorontalo shows that each region has a different form of Arabic script adaptation according to local needs. This indicates that areas that are not within the scope of Malay culture, including North Sulawesi, generally do not develop with the Jawi script tradition.[44] This condition has an impact on the slow improvement of students' technical skills in reading and writing Jawi during the research. Third, the understanding of Malay Islamic moral values is influenced by various external factors such as the family environment, local culture, teacher examples, and the intensity of students' religious activities, so that the contribution of Jawi literacy to the increase in moral values looks weak. Therefore, further research needs to expand the scope of the region, extend the duration of learning, and consider additional socio-cultural variables to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the role of Jawi literacy in shaping students' character.

Conclusion

This study shows that Jawi Arabic literacy has a positive but weak influence on the understanding of Malay Islamic moral values in MA Alkhairaat Bintauna students, with a contribution of 6.3% ($R^2 = 0.063$). Although the technical skills of Jawi literacy of students did not increase significantly, the understanding of Malay Islamic moral values increased significantly after learning based on religious literacy and local culture. This shows that Jawi literacy plays a role more as a means of internalizing moral values and spiritual reflection than just linguistic skills. Thus, this study answers the formulation of the problem that Jawi literacy still has an important educational value in shaping the character and morality of Malay Islam in the madrasah environment.

These results strengthen the relevance of Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) theory in Malay Islamic literacy learning. The CTL approach has proven effective in connecting texts with real-life contexts, so that students not only understand letter symbols, but also interpret moral values in Jawi texts according to their experiences. In addition, media and text-based learning theory is also supported by the findings that Jawi script teaching materials that contain moral messages, such as Ethical and Moral Guidance for Muslim Women, are able to foster students' awareness of Islamic values and character. Thus, Jawi literacy becomes a medium that integrates language, culture, and morals in a meaningful learning unit.

Substantively, this research has strategic implications for the development of Islamic education in Indonesia, especially in strengthening the character based on local culture. Jawi literacy learning in madrassas needs to be directed to the meaning of the content of the text and reflection of values, not just on reading and writing skills. Teachers play an important role as facilitators who help students understand the moral message of the Jawi text in the context of daily life. The integration of Jawi literacy in the Islamic education curriculum is also in line with the Merdeka Learning policy, which emphasizes strengthening the nation's identity, spiritual values, and culture.

In the future, the results of this research can be the basis for the development of a Malay Islamic literacy curriculum and contextual teaching materials based on Jawi texts in madrasas. Jawi literacy not only needs to be preserved as a written cultural heritage of the Malays, but also used as an instrument of moral education and character for the young generation of Muslims. Further research can be directed at the study of the relationship between Jawi literacy and aspects of religiosity, emotional, and social ethics to enrich the understanding of the role of literacy in the formation of Islamic personality. Overall, this study confirms that Jawi literacy is still relevant in modern Islamic education. Its main function is not just language skills, but a bridge between Malay Islamic texts, culture, and moral values. Therefore, learning Jawi literacy in madrassas can be used as the foundation for the formation of a Muslim generation with character, culture, and noble character in the midst of the challenges of today's education globalization.

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